

## West Lafayette Fire Department August 2010

Truck Repairs Pierce Manufacturing had three representatives in West Lafayette to meet with our department mechanic and myself concerning on-going but intermittent problems with our two newest trucks. The head electrical engineer, the lead customer service representative, and the regional sales manager all traveled from Wisconsin to WLFD to deal with this issue. The facility manager from the Indiana/Illinois dealership, Global Emergency Products, also traveled to WLFD to participate in the meeting.

The meeting was productive and a week later Engine 3 went to the Global facility near Indianapolis where changes were made to some of the electrical system circuits. So far the changes appear to have been effective however, it is too early to be sure as weather and other factors will need to play out over the next several weeks.

Training in Demo Buildings All three shifts were able to utilize the older Purdue Research Park buildings, off of Kent Avenue and Yeager Road, for different training activities before their scheduled demolition. Because each building has several thousand square feet of floor space we were able to practice techniques that vary with the building size. Training was done on locating and removing an incapacitated firefighter and also in ventilation.

“Negative pressure” ventilation has been used by fire departments for years as an effective method of removing smoke from a building. “Positive pressure” ventilation is a technique that was first used by a few fire departments twenty to thirty years ago and is now used by many departments throughout the country. WLFD began using it several years ago and has found it to be effective in many situations. With this technique the building is pressurized by placing large fans at an entrance and then the pressure release is controlled in a manner that systematically and effectively removes smoke. In certain circumstances, and with a great deal of caution, some departments have successfully used positive pressure ventilation to remove smoke, heat and combustible gases during fire attack and in rescue situations.

Mutual Aid Knowing that the report was for a very severe accident and that WLFD would likely be able to have the proper equipment and personnel at the scene sooner, the Wabash Fire Department requested mutual aid assistance from us with a car vs. semi accident on North River Road, between the City limits and I-65. The “jaws of life” were used but the vehicle damage and injuries prior to extrication were too severe.

The Linberg Road bridge construction and its effect on emergency responses have been discussed by our Department, the Wabash Volunteer Fire Department and the Purdue University Fire Department. A mutual aid construction MOU has been agreed upon and will continue the long standing cooperative efforts among all three departments to provide timely assistance to one another during emergency responses.

Chief Drew